

## CULTURAL MATERIALISM HELPS TO ADDRESS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL PROCESS AND RECENT LITERATURE

MAJEED H. KHALIFA

Department of English, College Education for Women, Tikrit University, Tikrit, Salahuddin, Iraq

### ABSTRACT

*Cultural materialism is application to many materials in society life. It offers a strong challenge to the combination of theoretical method, historical context, textual analysis and political commitment. The materials are the essential of relationship between these elements, which may represent important part in the people life. Sometime, literature is closely with the daily life of society, and it represents the cultural people needs. The method of cultural materialism criticizes and analyses the literary text as every day materials. It also explains the shape of political life.*

*This study examines the method of cultural materialism as a theory through the shape of every day belief. Moreover, it explains how cultural materialism can help to address the relationship between readers and literary texts, and also the relationship between new literary texts and social belief. Cultural materialism helps to address the language of current literature through the using of technological medium.*

*Furthermore, Cultural materialism plays important role in sustaining perpetuating conservative ideologies, because it determines the strategy of expression and analyses the relationship between expression and social belief. While, recent literature expresses collective belief system through the cultural materialism. Literary texts reflect the changes which always happen in the real life. These changes and movements have ideologies to continue in the society. The purpose of this study is to illustrate the cultural materialism as important method to deal with the relationship between social process and recent literature.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Cultural Materialism, Methodological Naturalism, Recent Literature, Collective Belief System, Sustaining Perpetuating Conservative Ideologies*

**Received:** Dec 01, 2015; **Accepted:** Dec 18, 2015; **Published:** Dec 29, 2015; **Paper Id.:** IJELFEB20162

### INTRODUCTION

Historically, cultural materialism was clearly appeared in literary texts. It was represented by using the nature of materials in historical literary texts. Cultural materialism tried to make a combination of historical context, textual analysis, theoretical methods and political promises. The ideology of these texts was understood as a material practice by the materialists. Moreover, most of literature in history had the impression of material like Shakespeare's plays, which were a reflection of colonial practices or political interest. His literature connects between art and nature. Shakespeare is known as a cultural icon through the media of education, technology and art. On the other hand, historicists are different in their look at works of Shakespeare. Some historicists look at bad and some other look at good. While, cultural materialists have different ideas about Shakespeare's products through the methods of materialism. They help specific strategy to improve the reading through the culture conservation and recent literary politics. In addition, the specific documents of history are dealt by cultural materialists as attempting to recreate zeitgeist and interpret certain moments in history. 'The cultural materialism

has to do with beliefs, identities, stories, values and social meanings (Moran, 2014, pp. 1-15)'. So, it assists to promote the idea which is made up of the realities of materialism. Therefore, cultural materialism means the research strategy of thought to understand the human culture as a best way to explore the material conditions. It is as a critical method has many characteristics like historical context, theoretical method, political commitment and textual analysis. The position of cultural materialism is described as a theory of specific cultural materialism in Marxist thought:

'Some critics, such as Tony Bunnett, have disputed the claim that cultural materialism is necessarily a Marxist theory, but the practitioners of cultural materialism have operated broadly within the parameters of Marxist conceptions of struggle and history.' (Brannigan 1998, p. 96)

These different opinions, which were opposed by practitioners of cultural materialism. It made them in opposition to the formalist criticism. In general, the materials and beliefs of every day are represented in culture, society and politics. Then, they are transformed into literature, theatre, music and so on, as special culture. Cultural materialism as a method of culture can assist to interpret how recent literature expresses that collective belief system. This inquiry can lead to argue in how collective beliefs and experiences are formed. The boundaries are signed between cultural practices and current literature as a form of expression. Therefore, the effectiveness of cultural materialism on recent literature is considered as a theoretical method. Also, recent literature expresses that collective belief system through the cultural materialism, so, cultural materialism plays important role in sustaining perpetuating conservative ideologies.

### **Cultural Materialism and the Shape of Every Day Belief**

The shape of every day belief and experiences are consisted from specialised cultural practices and literary selections. The relationship with social network includes the literary cultural practices, which help to acquire the accumulated experiences and collective beliefs. These material thoughts will lead to treat with the relationship between broad culture and social practices. 'Cultural materialist practices enable us to examine literary texts as part of wider context of cultural and political institutions (Brannigan 1998, p. 13)'. The methods of cultural materialists are different about the methods of new historicists; however, these two movements help to improve the specific plan for re-presenting the past as contemporary politics. Moreover, cultural materialists depend on the materialism in their culture like politic and economy. Although, Marxism differs with capitalism in the whole culture, but they agree that material is important to human being. According to Selden and Widdowson (1993, p. 71),

'Marx arguing that what we call 'culture' is not an independent reality but is inseparable from the historical conditions in which human being create their material lives,'

Methodological naturalism is used as one of the cultural materialism. It is a way of acquiring the culture, and it concerns with a knowledge approach to reality. Recent literature can read as parallel reading. It is always concern with personal freedom and liberal side. Cultural materialism appeared in the aspect of literature expression, which concerns with social process through the experiences and collective belief. Recent cultural materialism includes all forms of culture like pop music, visual art and aesthetic. It addresses the relationship between collective belief and recent literature through the interventions between man and women. Man and woman make their own history in recent culture. Consequently, recent literature is affected by cultural materialism, because it helps to move the experiences and collective belief from one medium to another.

Moreover, the boundaries are signed between cultural practices and current literature as a form of expression. The relationship between social and symbolic boundaries is determined by recent literature expression too. Cultural materialism has special important in the distinct of this relationship, because it extends the parts of current literary. There are some differences and nip up happen in the logic use of cultural materialism. 'The distinctions and overlaps between formal logic and practical logic are crucial to the workings of material culture (Watson 1999, p. 29)'. Contemporary development helped to spread materialism thoughts in spite of Marxism opposition. This spread includes literature, music, visual art and all aesthetic arts. Moreover, the literature and art address the social life through the poetry, novel, theatre, music pop/ Jazz and ballet. Recent literature expresses the collective belief by the helping of cultural materialism. The method of materialism connects across the social boundaries between social process and recent literature.

'The significance of this method of combining texts from many different genres and discourses was not to make the meanings and intentions of a literary text clearer.' (Brannigan 1998, p. 13)

Cultural materialism can help to address the relationship between readers and literature texts. These texts may represent important part in the life of people. Sometime, literature is closely with the daily life of society, and it represents the people needs. Therefore, cultural materialism is application to these materials.

Furthermore, cultural materialism affects recent literature as theoretical method. It contrasts with spiritual values in the literature. Also, it opposes Marxism theory in the social thoughts. According to Selden and Widdowson(1993, p. 71), explain 'The material interests of the dominant social class determine how people see human existence, individual and collective. 'But, cultural materialism becomes a part of contemporary literature, because it likes method which tries to collect all theoretical contexts and literary texts. Cultural materialism helps to explain the relationship between new literature texts and social belief. Moreover, cultural materialism uses contemporary power structure to make attention to method approach, such as, the academy and the church. That is because it tries to spread the ideas that comprises one's goals. 'According to cultural materialists, texts always have a material function within contemporary power structure(Brannigan 1998, p. 9)'. In addition, recent literature uses the tools of technology in contemporary culture such as, televisual technologies in education music and in theatre. As theoretical method, cultural materialism helps to address the language of current literature through the using of technological medium. It presents the language as material practices. According to Milner (1996, p. 34),

'Williaims language is best understood "as activity, as special consciousness". Whether spoken or written, language is not a "medium", in the sense of an intermediate communicative substance, mediating between thought and expression, but rather a constitutive element of material social practice.'

The effect of cultural materialism appeared clearly in the spread of recent literature through the new technologies,. Moreover, the relationship between collective belief and recent literature is addressed by cultural materialism as a method of theory. Therefore, materials nature interacts with recent literary productions as real things. Then it becomes a part of cultural materialism, which interferences with recent culture in overlapping relationship.

### **Collective Belief System as Cultural Materialism**

Recent literature expresses collective belief system through the cultural materialism. Collective belief system appeared through the using people of the culture. Contemporary writers use this culture in their expressions. But, cultural materialism refers to people response to the theoretical and practical literary, which are the discipline of recent literature.

According to Higgins (1999, p. 126), explains ‘The theory of cultural materialism was intended as a challenge and check to these subterranean continuities.’ Moreover, the inner selves of people are focused by romantic poets and texts, because poems and literary texts express the feeling of people. Also, literary activity is understood in its widest sense. The method of cultural materialism presents most powerful and productive for the explanation of different cultures. In recent literature, the expression in the poetry and plays represents the every day. It affects that collective belief system politically or economically. Cultural materialism determines the strategy of expression and analyses the relationship between expression and social belief. In addition, the critical attitude of cultural materialism happens in three dimensions. According to Higgins (1999, p. 134),

‘A key characteristic of cultural materialism is its bringing together of three dimensions of intellectual analysis and inquiry which are far too often kept apart, to the detriment of each: the textual, the theoretical of conceptual, and the historian.’

These three dimensions give the readers message. It illustrates the significance of cultural materialism as a theory in recent literature. Moreover, recent literature can be criticized by cultural materialists. Hence, cultural materialism can address the relationship between collective belief and contemporary literature.

Cultural materialism plays important role in sustaining perpetuating conservative ideologies. Literary texts reflect the changes which always happen in the real life. These changes and movements have ideologies to continue in the societies. Materials are the essential of relationship between these elements. Although, some elements are not depend on the material solutions, however, cultural materialism is presented between them. The method of cultural materialism helps to sustain the social norms and determine the cultural ideologies. But, that is not politicising of the literature. According to Brannigan(1998, p. 97), explains ‘The title is polemical to begin with, advertising the commitment to politicising literature which has become characteristic of cultural materialism. ‘Cultural materialism seeks to illustrate cultural ideology and symbolism within a materialistic structure. The use of law, religion, values, family and government must be useful to people. The method of cultural materialism analyses the relationship between these elements and collective belief through the recent literature texts. Also, it criticizes the wrong using of beneficial things through these texts. Therefore, cultural materialists believe cultural criticism is a part of politics. According to Brannigan(1998, p. 105),

‘Cultural materialism aims to subvert the tenets of humanist criticism by replacing the appeals to tradition and humanity with a call to the democratic ideals of potential, difference and the collective definition of social and political goals.’

The strategy of research and theoretical paradigm

Cultural materialism is dealt as theoretical paradigm and the strategy of research. Also, it is presented by simple hypothesis that the social of human life as result of the practical problems of existence. In addition, cultural materialism tries to separate from the connection with industry and economy, According to Wilson(1995, p. 122), explains ‘Cultural materialism attempts to free itself from the totalizing, technology historicism of traditional Marxism while at the same time maintaining the moral imperative and materialist commitment dependent on it.’ Therefore, the seeking in cultural ideologies within a materialistic framework helps materialists to know the interaction between social life and its applications in literary fields. Consequently, the method of cultural materialism can interpret these interactions and assist to address the relationship between collective belief and recent literature.

## CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, Cultural materialism emerges new historicism in the same level of new ways in Marxism and historicism. Historicists help specific strategy to develop the readings in the culture. Marxism theory invites to the idealism in the society without materials. Cultural materialism is important method to deal with literary contexts. This paper examined the method of cultural materialism as a theory through the shape of every day belief. Also, experiences consist from specialised cultural practices and literature selection. The boundaries are marked between cultural practices and current literature as a form of expression. Cultural materialism affects recent literature as theoretical method through it's a addressing the different current arts. Recent literature expresses that collective belief system through the cultural materialism, which plays important role in sustaining perpetuating conservative ideologies. In addition, cultural materialism offers the strong challenge to a combination of theoretical method, historical context, textual analysis and political commitment. The method of cultural materialism criticizes and analyses the literature text as every day materials. It explains the shape of political life social relations. Therefore, cultural materialism can help to address the relationship between collective belief and recent literature. Moreover, cultural materialism develops the idea of material realities like economic situations and technological developments. It considers the interpreter between collective belief and recent literature. Consequently, recent literature is affected by cultural materialism, which helps to move the experiences and collective belief from one medium to another.

## REFERENCES

1. Brannigan, J 1998, *New historicism and cultural materialism*, Macmillan, London.
2. Higgins, J 1999, *Raymond Williams : literature, Marxism and cultural materialism*, Routledge, London.
3. Milner, A 1996, *Literature, culture and society*, University College London Press, London.
4. Selden, R & Widdowson, P 1993, *A reader's guide to contemporary literary theory*, 3rd edn, Harvester Wheatsheaf, New York.
5. Watson, J 1999, *Literature and material culture from Balzac to Proust the collection and consumption of curiosities*, Cambridge studies in French ;, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge UK.  
<<http://ezproxy.usq.edu.au/login?url=http://site.ebrary.com/lib/unisouthernqld/Doc?id=2000922>>.
6. Wilson, S 1995, *Cultural materialism : theory and practice*, Blackwell, Cambridge Mass.
7. Moran, M 2014, *Rethinking "culture": A cultural-materialist account of social space*, *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, v. 1, no. 1, pp. 1-15.

